

The Spearin Surname Project newsletter – Autumn 2012

Current Status

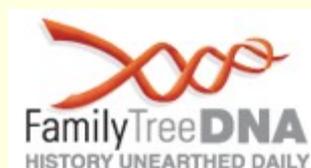
Since the last newsletter we have received the results of 2 new members (one from Florida, one from Philadelphia). You can read about their results below. This brings our membership to 15 with 11 of our members being exact or almost exact matches (in Genetic Family 1).

There is 1 member in each of the remaining 4 genetic families. However, we suspect that there was an NPE (non-paternity event) in at least 2 of these families (GF2 and GF3), which means that they may still be “genealogically” related to the Spearin’s in GF1, but not “genetically” related. GF4 Y-DNA is Mockridge and not Sperring (as discussed in the previous newsletter) so there still may be a common ancestor between the Spearin’s and the Sperring’s in the past 1000 years, we just need to find some Sperring Y-DNA.

As more people with English roots join the project, we will eventually be able to tell whether the genetic signature in GF5 is also the result of an NPE or represents a second separate and distinct origin for the Spearin/Sperring/Sperring surname.

New Results

Since the last newsletter we have 2 new members - a Speerin from Florida, and a Sperring from Philadelphia. Both match Genetic Family 1. This indicates that they share a common ancestor with the other members of the group, probably somewhere in Limerick in the 1700’s.

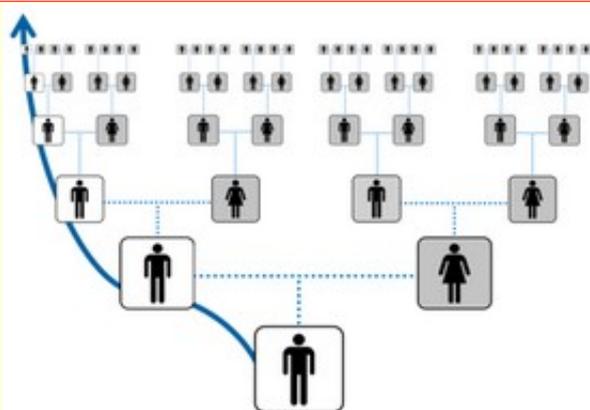


The Florida family (US77,NY10) may be linked to one of the Canadian branches from GF1 (it’s one of the few families with the name Tobias in the tree). The Philadelphia Sperring family (US111,PA23) have roots in Ireland (according to the US census) but there is little information beyond that. The DNA results now place their likely origin as Limerick and also link them to the London Sperring’s before that.

DNA Project – next steps

The [Traditional Families table](#) on the website lists 45 UK families, 18 Irish, 25 Australian, 16 Canadian, and 132 US ... and this table is likely to be incomplete and will need continuous updating.

What would the results look like if we got a DNA sample from each family!? Would there be one predominant genetic signature? Or would there be several indicating different sources for the Spearin/Sperring name?

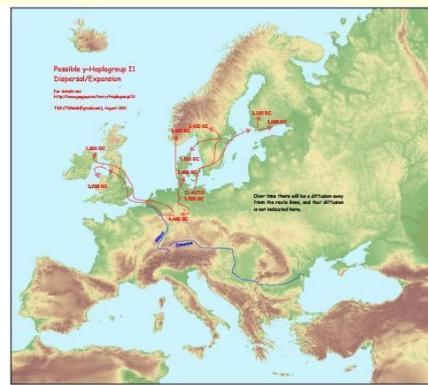


We need more people to take the test in order to get a better picture of how the different variants are related (if at all) and to establish which of the 236 families in the Traditional Families table share a common ancestor and are genetic cousins! In particular, we need more people with documented origins in England and continental Europe to join the project, especially the south-western English counties of [Somerset](#), Devon, [Gloucestershire](#) and Wiltshire.

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Y-DNA Deep Origins – Genetic Family 1 (I2b1)

There have been some further developments on the deeper ancestry of the I2b1 haplogroup (Genetic Family 1, GF1). Several members from our Spearin group volunteered to be involved in testing newly discovered SNP's ([single nucleotide polymorphisms](#)) as part of the [I-M223 Y-haplogroup](#) project headed by Aaron Torres. The results so far reveal that the members of GF1 belong to the I2b1 subgroup "Cont 1" and the particular SNP profile in GF1 is M223 >>> Z161 > L801 > Z76 > Z78 > L1198 > Z185 (the latter being the new current terminal SNP for this group, revised since the last newsletter). SNP's that tested negative were Z79 and Z190.



Currently the Spearin group is the largest subgroup of Cont 1. There are 24 members in Cont 1 currently, 10 Spearin's and 14 non-Spearin's. In time, as more people join and get tested, analysis of the SNP and STR markers may help split the different members of Cont 1 into different subgroups, and it may be possible to tell which group split away from which other group. There is a [new page on the website](#) devoted to our deeper genetic origins and it includes a comparison of the [Cont 1 Y-DNA results](#) with [our results in GF1](#). This comparison reveals that several Spearin members have unique mutations compared to both Cont 1 and other members in GF1.

Incidentally, it was only by comparing our results with those in Cont-1 that we realised that there must have been a lab error in the results for member 200083/H1172. We asked the lab to retest his 68-111 marker panel and the values changed substantially as a result. It is worth bearing in mind that unusual results can sometimes be attributable to lab error.

Website Updates

Apart from the [new page relating to our deeper ancestry](#) mentioned above, there is [another new page](#) that explains what is involved in DNA testing and how the various tests work. This is based on a presentation I gave at the Back to Our Past conference in Dublin on Oct 13th. The presentation is split into 4x 15-minute videos and has generated quite a lot of interest. Hopefully this will drive traffic to the website and will raise the profile and awareness of our project.



We need **biographies** to be written for each most distant known ancestor of each family in the [Traditional Families table](#). By comparing the circumstances of each of these MDKAs, it may provide clues as to which other MDKAs may be most closely related to them. We will publish them in the [Biographies](#) section of the website. Margaret and I will be attacking this particular task over the next few months so you can expect an email asking if we got it right for your particular family!

We also need to **map the known locations** for each MDKA to see which Spearin branches were living in close proximity to each other (and therefore more likely to be closely related). This project has just got underway at [Google Maps](#) but will be developed further over the next several months for each of the families currently in the DNA project and extending to other families thereafter.

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Traditional Genealogy update



In terms of genealogical origins, the focus of the Spearin/Spearing project is in three main areas – Ireland, England, and continental Europe (particularly the Netherlands, Belgium, and northern Germany). We need more members from these areas to help answer the question: which Spearin's are related to which Spearing's?

The family with the deepest roots so far remains **GF1** (the Irish Spearin's), going back to the mid-1500's in London. We have also started some in-depth work on the Limerick origins of this family, and the families they married into (Hartwell, Barry, and Greene). What is immediately apparent is that the Hartwell's were NOT soldiers in the parliamentary Army of Oliver Cromwell, but rather Royalist soldiers in the army of Charles I. They were granted land in Bohernakeilly (Boherquill) which later became the family burial ground for the Spierin's. This section of the website (the Early Limerick Spearin's) is being updated.



I had the pleasure of meeting up with a whole rake of Spearin's over the summer including Neil, Pam, Bob, Margaret, Joe, and Vera. I also went on a scouting trip around Limerick (with Margaret, and my Dad) and we found some useful leads in the Adare Heritage Centre, particularly among the papers of the Earl of Dunraven. Margaret is looking through some of these papers in search of Spearin's (there are over 15,000 documents). I'll be posting some photos of our trip on our Facebook page - the photo shows me, Dad, Margaret and her newborn grandson – so cute!



Facebook Update

Our [Facebook group](#) continues to grow and currently boasts 154 members. It is a wonderful place for sharing information, photos, documents, and newspaper articles.



If you haven't done so already, please fill in your family ID in the document "[Which Family Are You](#)" – this helps everyone know exactly where you fit into the bigger picture! You will find your Family ID in the [Traditional Families table](#) on the website.



Our Facebook group has also "teamed up" with the [Sperring+ Facebook group](#), dedicated to researching the Sperring surname. Many hands make light work!

Also, Margaret has set up a [specialist genealogical group](#) for researchers interested in family origins from Limerick. This has already generated a huge amount of interest in a very short space of time and already has 307 members (well done, Margaret!). It may be that this will help put us in touch with researchers investigating the families that the Irish Spearin's married into.

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New Online Resources

Here is a list of online resources that have been identified by the group over the past 3 months:

[Estate Maps of County Limerick](#)

[Index to the Earl of Dunraven's papers](#)

[Memorials of Adare Manor](#)

[Irish confraternities and Parish Associations website](#)

[Human Migration](#)

[DNA success stories](#)

[Advice for adopted children](#)

Spreading the Word

Please feel free to pass this on to anyone who is interested in researching the Spearin name, or ask them to [send me](#) their email address and I will add them to the list. If you want to be Y-DNA tested at a discounted rate through our project, [click here](#). If you want to [unsubscribe](#) from this list at any time, just let me know. The web address for the Spearin Surname Project is <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~spearin/Index.html>



Aims of the Project

It is always useful to recap on the goals of the project, namely to use genetic genealogy to enhance traditional (documentary) genealogical research with the ultimate goal of tracing each family with the Spearin/Spearing/Sperring surname (or other variant) back to their ancestral roots. The DNA part of the project has the following objectives:

1. to establish the most common genetic signatures among people named Spearin/Spearing/Sperring (or any of its many other variants)
2. to establish which Spearin variants are most closely related to each other (for example, are the Irish Spearin's related to the English Sperring's or the Dutch Spierink's?)
3. to help people named Spearin/Spearing establish to which genetic family they belong
4. to identify which members within a given genetic family are most closely related
5. to generate theories based on the DNA data relating to the deeper ancestral origins of each genetic family, both within a genealogical timeframe (i.e. after 1000 A.D.) and before it (i.e. route of migration out of Africa and into Europe, up to 1000 A.D.)

*Maurice Gleeson
Project Co-Administrator
Oct 2012*

